

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A compound needle comprising: a needle body having a hook and blade grooves with a partition wall between them, the hook being provided at a front end of the needle body; and a slider including a pair of blades, the blades being movable back and forth in the blade grooves,

wherein front ends of the two blades are opened toward left and right, and the blades include curved portions curved inwardly on a backside of the front ends of the blades, and

wherein the partition wall has a non-uniform thickness in a longitudinal direction including: a relatively thick section on a front end side of the blade grooves; and a relatively thin section or a cutout section on a backside of the thick section.

2. (Original) A compound needle according to claim 1, wherein the thickness of the partition wall is relatively thin on the backside.

3. (Currently Amended) A compound needle according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein when the two blades move back into the blade grooves, the curved portions contact the thick section or the cutout section of the partition wall.